

man to be their standard bearer. And it's good for our democracy that that happened. And we also had a major contender being a woman. Obviously, Hillary Clinton was a major contender. So I think it's a good sign for American democracy.

Now the debate begins as to who could be the best President. And I'm in an interesting position. I ran hard for Presidency twice; I campaigned hard in the off years, and now I'll be passing the mantle on to Senator McCain, particularly at the convention when he becomes the official nominee of our party. Obviously, he's going to be the nominee, but there's a moment at the convention where it's—"here he is." And I'll do my part to help him win, and—but it's going to be up to him. That's—he'll be the man sitting in the Oval Office making the tough decisions for peace and security.

Iraq

Mr. Riotta. You mentioned history at the beginning of this interview. And you know—you're aware that history will ask you about Iraq. What do you think, now when you look back to Iraq, especially after the report yesterday, are you still happy with all these positions?

The President. Look, I want to remind people, the report yesterday was one of many reports that—everybody thought Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. I will remind people—and one of the things that's important about history is to remember the true history. And so the Security Council resolution was 15 to nothing on Saddam Hussein: disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences. European nations—France, Great Britain—supported that—1441, because everybody thought he had weapons of mass destruction, including many of the people who—of the Democratic Party here in the United States. You should listen to their words and listen to their quotes.

And so, absolutely, getting rid of Saddam Hussein was the right thing. And it was—we're all disappointed the intelligence wasn't what it was. But now the challenge is to help this young democracy survive. And a democracy in the heart of the Middle East is going to be, in my judgment, a powerful part of change. And we've got to work to free people

in the Middle East from tyranny, because that is from—the place from which the terrorists have launched their attacks.

President's Future

Mr. Riotta. In the few seconds that are left, what will you do next?

The President. You know, good question. I haven't had much time to think about it, because I've got a lot to do. But I will probably write a book talking about the decisions I had to make, precisely to make sure that history understands the conditions and the environment during which I had to make decisions; start a freedom institute at what's called Southern Methodist University in Dallas to talk about the universal values of freedom abroad and at home. And other than that, I'm open for suggestions.

Mr. Riotta. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, sir. Thanks. Looking forward to going back to Rome. It's a fabulous city, one of the great cities of the world.

Mr. Riotta. Especially after you leave the White House, come and I will take you around. [*Laughter*] Without the constraint of official—

The President. I'd love to.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 10:28 a.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy; Pope Benedict XVI; King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia; Democratic Presidential candidate Barak Obama; former Democratic Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton; and Republican Presidential candidate John McCain. The interviewer referred to former Republican Presidential candidate Rudolph W. Giuliani. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 7. A portion of this interview could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

The President's Radio Address

June 7, 2008

Good morning. Congress will soon vote on legislation to fund our troops serving on the frontlines of the war on terror. This is an opportunity for Congress to give our men and women in uniform the tools they need to protect us, and Congress should approve these vital funds immediately.

Congress has had this funding request for more than a year, and there is no reason for further delay. This money is urgently needed to support military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. I put forward some reasonable requirements this bill must meet. First, this bill must give our troops the resources they need to defeat the terrorists and extremists. Second, the bill must not tie the hands of our commanders. And third, the bill must not exceed the reasonable and responsible funding levels I have requested.

Congress has had 16 months to decide how they will meet these requirements, and now the time has come for them to support our troops in harm's way. If Congress does not act, critical accounts at the Department of Defense will soon run dry. At the beginning of next month, civilian employees may face temporary layoffs. The Department will have to close down a vital program that is getting potential insurgents off the streets and into jobs. The Pentagon will run out of money it needs to support critical day-to-day operations that help keep our Nation safe. And after July, the Department will no longer be able to pay our troops, including those serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Our men and women in uniform and their families deserve better than this. Around the world, our troops are taking on dangerous missions with skill and determination. In Afghanistan, they're delivering blows to the Taliban and Al Qaida. In Iraq, they've helped bring violence down to its lowest point since late March of 2004. Civilian deaths are down. Sectarian killings are down. As security has improved, the economy has improved as well, and political reconciliation is taking place at the grassroots and national levels. The Iraqi security forces are becoming more capable, and as they do, our troops are beginning to come home under a policy of return on success.

Each day, the men and women of our Armed Forces risk their lives to make sure their fellow citizens are safer. They serve with courage and honor. They've earned the respect of all Americans. And they deserve the full support of Congress. I often hear Members of Congress say they oppose the war but still support the troops. Now they have a chance to prove it. Congress should

pass a responsible funding bill that gives our men and women in uniform the resources they need and the support they have earned.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:30 a.m. on June 6 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 7. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 6 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Death of Jim McKay

June 7, 2008

Laura and I were saddened to learn of the passing of Jim McKay. For a generation of Americans, Jim was more than the much-honored host of "Wide World of Sports" and ABC's Olympic coverage. He was a talented and eloquent newsman and storyteller whose special gift was his ability to make the viewers at home genuinely care about more than just who won or lost.

Jim was at his best during what had to be his most difficult assignment, hosting with skill and sensitivity ABC's blanket coverage of the 1972 Munich Olympics hostage crisis.

Off camera, he was a compassionate and generous person and devoted family man.

We are also grateful for Jim's service to his country as a naval officer aboard a mine-sweeper during World War II.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Jim's wife, Margaret, his children, Sean and Mary, and all of his family and friends.

Interview With Natasa Briski of Slovenia's POP TV

June 6, 2008

Ms. Briski. First of all, I would like to thank you very much for this opportunity and for your time, Mr. President. Thank you very much.

The President. You're welcome.